

## House Republican Press Release

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### Fairfield County Caucus Urges Congress To Preserve Transportation Funding For Connecticut



Senator Judith G. Freedman (R-26), leader of the Fairfield County Caucus, Senator William H. Nickerson (R-36) and Representative Toni Boucher (R-143) with members of the bipartisan Fairfield County Caucus are urging Congress to protect Connecticut's funding while working to resolve the differences in separate pending House and Senate federal transportation bills.

The Fairfield County Caucus legislators signed a letter to the conference co-chairs, U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords of Vermont and U.S. Senator Harry Reid of Nevada, urging Congress to enact a six-year reauthorization bill funded at \$318 billion, and maintain the 90.5% minimum guarantee contained within the current formula. The state legislators wrote their letter to emphasize their support for the position staked out by Governor M. Jodi Rell in a letter she wrote to Congress earlier.

"As Connecticut state legislators who represent Fairfield County, we are deeply concerned about the effects that federal transportation legislation can have- both positive and negative – on our state's ongoing highway and mass transit programs. Governor M. Jodi Rell is absolutely correct in her analysis of our state's needs with regard to the pending transportation legislation, and we fully support her recent letter on this matter," stated the legislators in their letter.

"Because of congestion, density and high construction costs, Connecticut has greater transportation needs than many other states, especially for mass transit improvements. We cannot meet these requirements without greater help from the federal government," said **Representative Boucher**.

"Connecticut has an aging rail, transit and highway system yet it is one of the most heavily traveled in the country. It is essential that the state receive its fair share of highway dollars to maintain and improve these assets. The most pressing need is in Fairfield County where the interstate road system is operating at up to 50% over its design capacity, with much of the traffic being interstate trucking. Connecticut cannot be expected to bear the burden of maintaining this system without significant increases in federal funding. I support the Governor in her efforts to move Congress to recognize this need," said **Senator Nickerson**.

"It is my understanding that approving the \$318 billion in the Senate bill, and maintaining the 90.5 percent minimum rate of return called for by the House bill will increase Connecticut's funding. Those of us who live in this part of the state are reminded daily of the transportation grid which increases due to lack of funding. Fairfield County is the funnel through which everything moves," said **Senator Freedman**.